

bitumen from it, and make use of it by way of charm or expiation, to avoid evil." A more general Assyrian tradition, somewhat different in its details, also survives.\* The god Chronus, it was said, appeared in a vision to Xisuthrus, the tenth king of Babylon ; and, warning him that on a certain day there would be a great flood upon the earth, by which mankind would be destroyed, he enjoined him to build a vessel, and to bring into it his friends and relatives, with everything necessary to sustain life, and all the various animals, birds, and quadrupeds. In obedience to the command, the king built a vessel about three quarters of a mile in length and half a mile in breadth, which he loaded with stores and the different kinds of animals ; and into which, on the day of the flood, he himself entered, accompanied by his wife and children, and all his friends. The flood broke out. After, however, accomplishing its work of destruction, it abated ; and the king sent out birds from the vessel, which, at first finding no food or place of rest, returned to him ; but which, when, after the lapse of some days, he sent them forth again, came back to him with their feet tinged with mud. On a third trial they returned no more ; upon which, judging that the surface of the earth was laid dry, he made an opening in the vessel, and, looking forth, found it stranded on a mountain of the land of Armenia.

There seems to exist no such definite outline of the Egyptian tradition referred to by Josephus as that preserved of the Chaldean one. Plato, in his "Timæus," makes the Egyptian priest whom he introduces as discoursing with Solon, to attribute that clear recollection of a remote antiquity which survived in Egypt, to its comparative freedom from those great floods which had at various times desolated Greece, and destroyed the memory of remote events by the destruction of the people and their records ; and Bacon had evidently this

\* See Corry's "Ancient Fragments."